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United States
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Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively
Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but
Improvements Could be Made

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOR	Area of Responsibility
ASD (SO/LIC)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/ Low-Intensity Conflict
COCOM	Combatant Command
DOS	Department of State
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
FDR	Foreign Disaster Relief
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHDACA	Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
USAFRICOM	U.S. Africa Command
USCENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
USEUCOM	U.S. European Command
USPACOM	U.S. Pacific Command
USSOUTHCOM	U.S. Southern Command
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
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August 14, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY
COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND
COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND
COMMANDER, U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND
COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND
COMMANDER, U.S. AFRICA COMMAND
DIRECTOR, DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY
DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

SUBJECT: Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed
Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made
(Report No. DODIG-2012-119)

We are providing this report for your information and use. Although most geographic combatant commands effectively planned and executed several disaster relief operations, the efficiency of those operations could be improved with updated DoD disaster relief policy and the implementation of several best practices. We considered management comments on a draft of the report in preparing the final report.

Comments from the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy were partially responsive but met the intent of the recommendations. The comments from the Commanders, U.S. European, Central, Southern, Pacific, and Africa Commands, conformed to the requirements. Therefore, we do not require any additional comments.

We appreciate the courtesies extended to the staff. Please direct questions to me at (703) 604-8905 (DSN 664-8905).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Amy J. Frontz", is positioned above the printed name.

Amy J. Frontz
Principal Assistant Inspector General
for Auditing



Results in Brief: Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made

What We Did

We evaluated the ability of the combatant commands (COCOMs) to plan and execute foreign disaster relief (FDR) operations to prevent instability in their areas of responsibility. We also assessed the support provided by DoD organizations to enable the COCOMs to effectively conduct FDR operations.

What We Found

The U.S. European, Central, Southern, and Pacific Commands have effectively planned and executed several FDR operations. Additionally, DoD organizations provided satisfactory support to COCOM FDR operations. However, improvements in FDR operations are needed, such as formalizing response procedures, promoting information sharing, increasing phase-zero activities, promoting the sharing of lessons learned, and updating DoD Directive (DoDD) 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief," December 4, 1975.

Improvements are needed because COCOMs may not have known about or been required to implement best practices for FDR. In addition, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy did not update the 37-year-old directive on FDR in a timely manner.

As a result, the most efficient practices for FDR are not available to all COCOMs. This is especially important to COCOMs that have not executed a large FDR operation, such as U.S. Africa Command, to prevent similar obstacles already faced and overcome at other commands. Additionally, a lack of updated guidance can lead to inconsistent interpretations of authorities and responsibilities to provide FDR assistance. Without best practices and up-to-date guidance, DoD is less likely to achieve efficiencies when handling potential and actual disasters.

What We Recommend

The Commanders, U.S. European, Central, Southern, Pacific, and Africa Commands, should implement best practices for FDR in key areas, such as command procedures, information sharing, phase-zero activities, and dissemination of lessons learned.

In addition, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, in coordination with the geographic combatant commanders, should identify steps to improve information sharing with non-DoD partners during FDR operations.

Management Comments and Our Response

U.S. European, Central, Southern, Pacific, and Africa Commands comments were responsive to the recommendation. Comments from the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy were partially responsive but met the intent of the recommendations; additional comments are not required. Although not required to, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and Joint Staff also provided comments. Please see the recommendations table on the back of this page.

Figure. DoD Air Traffic Control Center in Haiti During Operation Unified Response in 2010



Source: U.S. Southern Command Web site.

Recommendations Table

Management	Recommendations Requiring Comment	No Additional Comments Required
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy		2, 3.a, 3.b
Commander, U.S. European Command; Commander, U.S. Central Command; Commander, U.S. Southern Command; Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; and Commander, U.S. Africa Command		1

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Introduction

Objective

Our objective was to evaluate the ability of the combatant commands (COCOMs) to plan and execute disaster relief operations to prevent instability in their areas of responsibility (AORs). However, we focused our fieldwork on evaluating the planning and execution of foreign disaster relief (FDR)¹ operations by U.S. European (USEUCOM), Central (USCENTCOM), Southern (USSOUTHCOM), Pacific (USPACOM), and Africa (USAFRICOM) Commands to alleviate the suffering of foreign disaster victims. We also assessed the support provided by DoD organizations to enable the COCOMs to effectively conduct those operations. See the appendix for the scope and methodology and prior coverage related to the objective.

Background on DoD Foreign Disaster Relief Operations

In recent years, DoD has had an increased role in FDR operations, particularly during Operation Unified Response in response to the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 and Operation Tomodachi in response to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011. Because of its assets and capabilities, the U.S. military will continue to be called upon to provide aid and assistance in the event of disasters like the Pakistan flooding in 2010 and the Turkey earthquake in 2011. Military assets should be requested only when there is no comparable civilian alternative and only when the use of military assets can meet a critical humanitarian need. Therefore, the DoD assistance provided must be unique in capability and availability.

Legal Authority and DoD Policy for Foreign Disaster Relief Operations

DoD has the legal authority, under section 404, title 10, United States Code, to conduct FDR operations outside the United States to respond to manmade or natural disasters when necessary to prevent loss of lives or serious harm to the environment. Additionally, section 2561, title 10, United States Code, provides legal authority for transporting humanitarian relief and for other humanitarian purposes worldwide.

DoD Directive (DoDD) 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief,” December 4, 1975,² established policy guidance and assigned responsibilities for FDR operations. DoDD 5100.46 defined FDR as prompt aid that can be used to alleviate the suffering of disaster victims.

¹ DoDD 5100.46 defines FDR as prompt aid that can be used to alleviate the suffering of foreign disaster victims. Joint Publication 3-29 refers to FDR as foreign humanitarian assistance. Other terms used to describe FDR are humanitarian assistance and disaster assistance. In this report, FDR will be the term used to maintain consistency.

² On July 6, 2012, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy reissued DoDD 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief.” We conducted this audit from September 2011 through June 2012; therefore, this report references the policies and guidance that existed during that period.

In May 2004, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD [SO/LIC]) and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) issued a joint message, “Policy and Procedures for DoD Participation in Foreign Disaster Relief/Emergency Response Operations.” Although not a formal directive, it provided updated policy and procedures for DoD participation in FDR operations.

Joint Publication 3-29, “Foreign Humanitarian Assistance,” March 17, 2009, provides joint doctrine for planning, executing, and assessing foreign humanitarian assistance operations. The publication applies to the Joint Staff, COCOM commanders, and the Services, among others.

Organizations Involved in Foreign Disaster Relief

DoD works in concert with several U.S. Government agencies and offices to provide a whole-of-Government response to foreign disasters consistent with U.S. foreign policy. Key agencies and offices, such as the Department of State (DOS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) work in coordination with DoD organizations, such as the geographic COCOMs and DSCA.

When an overseas disaster occurs, DOS is responsible for deciding whether emergency FDR is consistent with U.S. foreign policy and whether DoD assistance is needed. USAID is an independent Federal agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. USAID’s OFDA is the lead office in the U.S. Government for facilitating and coordinating emergency assistance overseas. The office formulates U.S. foreign disaster assistance policy in coordination with other Government agencies. It coordinates with USAID offices and others to provide relief supplies and humanitarian assistance. OFDA also develops and manages logistical, operational, and technical support for disaster response.

According to DoDD 5100.46, the geographic COCOMs are responsible for conducting FDR operations, as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff or higher authority. They are also responsible for keeping the Joint Chiefs informed of details involving actual participation in FDR operations. The combatant commanders develop and maintain Commander’s estimates, base, concept, or operational plans for FDR operations.

DSCA is a DoD agency under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. DSCA manages the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation, which funds DoD humanitarian assistance and FDR and emergency response.

Foreign Disaster Relief Approval Process

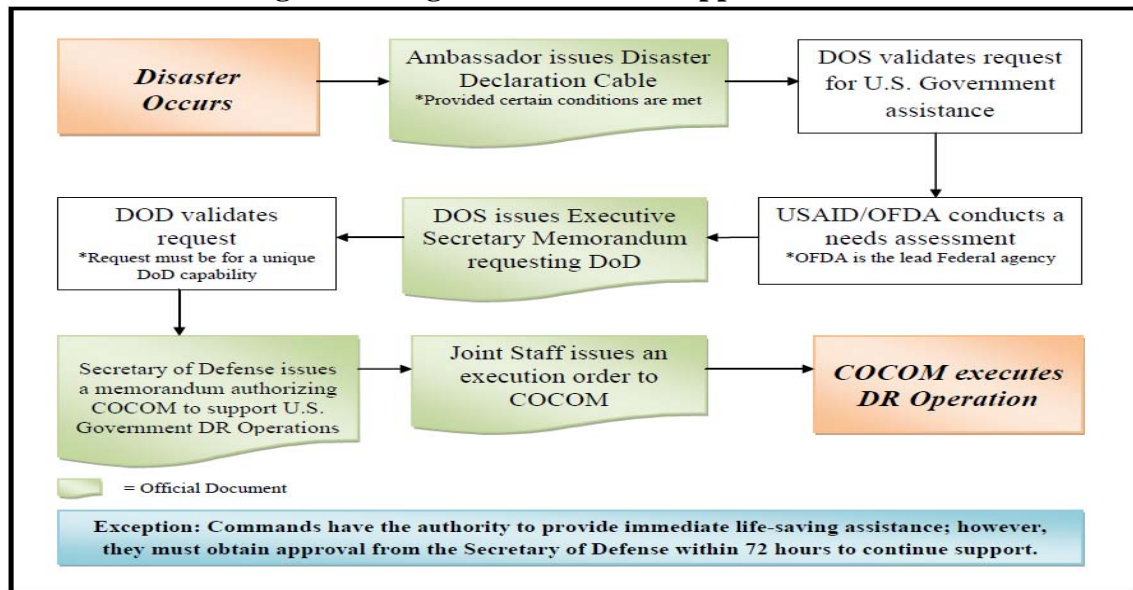
When a disaster occurs, the U.S. ambassador to the affected country sends a disaster declaration cable to DOS, formally requesting U.S. Government assistance. The request can be sent provided the affected country is overwhelmed and either requests or is willing to accept U.S. Government assistance, and such assistance is in the U.S. interest.

OFDA validates all requests for U.S. Government FDR assistance. OFDA, as the lead Federal office, conducts a needs assessment to determine and coordinate the appropriate U.S. response. In coordination with USAID/OFDA, the applicable COCOM may also send a military team to the disaster site. The team will work closely with USAID/OFDA representatives ensuring a coherent and comprehensive assessment of requirements and proposed U.S. Government response. If OFDA validates a need for DoD assistance, DOS formally requests assistance through an Executive Secretary memorandum.

ASD (SO/LIC) prepares and coordinates a recommendation on the appropriate level of DoD assistance to be provided. The recommendation is forwarded to the Secretary of Defense for review and approval. Approval is based on several factors including the availability of requested support, the impact of such support on other military operations, the urgency of the disaster situation, and the political implications of DoD involvement.

If the Secretary of Defense approves the recommendation, DSCA finalizes logistical and financial details in coordination with the applicable COCOM, USAID, OFDA, Joint Staff, and other relevant offices. The Secretary of Defense then issues a memorandum to the COCOM Commander authorizing the command to support U.S. Government FDR operations. The memorandum includes details of the approved assistance, authorization to use OHDACA funding, and the amount approved. After DSCA provides notification that preparations are complete, Joint Staff issues an order directing the COCOM to execute the FDR operation. The figure below outlines the general FDR approval process.

Figure. Foreign Disaster Relief Approval Process



Source: DoD Office of Inspector General.

In addition to the above process, COCOMs may also provide FDR assistance when lives are in immediate danger and the COCOMs are in a position to provide immediate life-saving assistance. However, the COCOM must follow-up as soon as possible, but

not later than 72 hours after initiating assistance, to secure Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) approval to continue assistance. The COCOM must end support once life-threatening circumstances have been addressed, unless OSD gives approval to continue providing support.

DoD Directive on Foreign Disaster Relief Needs Updating

DoD Instruction 5010.40, “Managers’ Internal Control Program (MICP) Procedures,” July 29, 2010, requires DoD organizations to implement a comprehensive system of internal controls that provides reasonable assurance that programs are operating as intended and to evaluate the effectiveness of the controls. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy did not follow DoDI 5025.01, “DoD Directives Program,” July 1, 2010, which contains requirements for updating DoD issuances including directives. DoDD 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief,” had not been updated since it was issued in 1975. As a result, the Directive did not contain the accurate organizational entities involved in FDR or their current responsibilities. Implementing Recommendation 3 will aid DoD in ensuring that its DR policy reflects DoD’s current operations. We will provide a copy of the report to the senior official responsible for internal controls in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

Finding. Most Geographic COCOMs Effectively Planned and Executed Foreign Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made

The USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USSOUTHCOM, and USPACOM have effectively planned and executed several FDR operations. Additionally, DoD organizations provided satisfactory support to COCOM FDR operations. However, improvements in FDR operations are needed for:

- implementing best practices, including:
 - updating and formalizing FDR procedures at the COCOM level,
 - information sharing with non-DoD partners,
 - increasing phase-zero activities,³
 - capturing and sharing lessons learned with other COCOMs after a FDR operation, and
- updating DoDD 5100.46.

Improvements are needed because COCOMs may not have known about or been required to implement best practices to formalize procedures for FDR, expand information sharing, increase phase-zero activities, and consistently share lessons learned about FDR with other COCOMs. Furthermore, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy did not follow DoDI 5025.01 by not reviewing and regularly updating the 37-year-old DoDD 5100.46, which describes DoD organizational responsibilities for FDR.

As a result, the most efficient practices for FDR are not known by all COCOMs. This is especially important for COCOMs that have not executed a large FDR operation, such as USAFRICOM, to prevent similar obstacles already faced and overcome at other commands. Additionally, a lack of clear updated guidance can lead to inconsistent interpretations of authorities and responsibilities to provide FDR assistance. Without best practices and up-to-date FDR guidance, DoD is less likely to achieve efficiencies when handling potential and actual FDR events.

³ Phase-zero activities represent the normal, enduring, day-to-day operations before a crisis occurs; primarily, identifying potential crises; maintaining situational awareness of crisis events; and educating, training, and preparing our forces and our partner nations for disaster response.

Most Geographic COCOMs Effectively Planned and Executed Foreign Disaster Relief Operations

Most COCOMs have effectively planned and executed several FDR operations. They have applied the same basic framework to plan for FDR operations; however, the COCOMs had different levels of experience in executing those operations. Specifically, some COCOMs have executed various or large-scale FDR operations, while USAFRICOM has executed only one.

Similarities Among COCOM Foreign Disaster Relief Operations Planning

The COCOMs applied a similar framework in planning for FDR operations. These effective practices included embedding an OFDA representative in the command, conducting preliminary assessments, and coordinating internally among COCOM staff sections. These similarities helped the COCOMs effectively prepare for FDR operations.

An OFDA representative was embedded within each COCOM to facilitate coordination between the COCOM and OFDA throughout a FDR operation. Officials at several COCOMs stated that the OFDA representative was extremely beneficial to coordination during a FDR operation. OFDA coordinates the U.S. Government response; therefore, having a representative embedded with the COCOM ensures that communication is constant during each stage of a FDR operation. The early coordination allows the COCOMs to proactively plan for a FDR response and ensures they can execute immediately should assistance be requested. In order to achieve mission objectives during a FDR operation, interagency coordination is essential for effective execution and implementation.

Command officials stated that COCOMs had an operations center that monitors activity in their AOR and when a disaster occurs, most COCOMs conduct a preliminary analysis of the situation. For example, USEUCOM can initiate a “quick-look” when an event occurs, but it does not know whether assistance will be requested. Personnel create a briefing slide to scope the situation with background information on the incident and what the Operations Directorate believes the COCOM could provide in the event assistance is requested.

The COCOMs have also developed similar processes for effective internal coordination between staff sections during planning for a FDR operation, most commonly known as an operational planning team. A primary goal of this team is to develop initial options for assistance and respond to any crisis in which military personnel, supplies, or equipment may be committed. Some COCOMs concept plans identify staff sections that should provide personnel to the operational planning team. For example, USPACOM’s operational planning team reconvenes to refine initial assistance options, incorporate staff inputs, and finalize all information into a concept of operations packaged in briefing charts. The charts clearly and concisely express what will be accomplished and what resources will be available. They also describe how military and supporting

organizations' actions will be integrated, synchronized, and phased in to accomplish the mission. Once the USPACOM Commander approves the concept of operations, the Operations Directorate submits it to the Joint Staff and OSD.

Most of the time, the operational planning team meets while the FDR approval process is taking place. This allows the COCOM to have a concept of operations already developed so that when it receives the execution order from the Joint Staff, the command is ready to execute.

Variations Exist in the Ability of COCOMs to Execute Foreign Disaster Relief Operations

Although all COCOMs followed a similar process when planning FDR operations, each

Each COCOM had a different level of experience in its ability to execute FDR operations.

COCOM had a different level of experience in its ability to execute FDR operations. For example, USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USSOUTHCOM, and USPACOM have executed several FDR operations, some large-scale, while USAFRICOM

has executed only one FDR operation.

- USEUCOM has responded to three disasters since 2010, including an earthquake in Turkey and wildfires in Israel and Russia.
- USCENTCOM provided FDR assistance to Pakistan as a result of flooding in 2010.
- USSOUTHCOM provided FDR assistance to Haiti in 2010. Operation Unified Response was a large-scale operation to provide life-saving assistance and deliver millions of pounds of food and water following a significant earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
- USPACOM provided FDR assistance to Japan in 2011. The large-scale operation was conducted in the aftermath of an earthquake and tsunami.

In 2011, USAFRICOM executed one small-scale FDR operation in support of the operations in Libya. A USAFRICOM official said that the command used OHDACA funds to purchase ambulances and supplies and restore buildings in Libya. However, this is the only time USAFRICOM has executed a FDR response. USAFRICOM officials also stated that this is partially because of their unique AOR and the large presence of non-governmental organizations and the United Nations. Furthermore, an USAFRICOM official said that a lack of assets and assigned forces could cause an issue if the USAFRICOM is ever required to respond to a disaster in the future. Many extremist organizations within the USAFRICOM AOR pose significant threats to regional stability and U.S. national interests, and several of Africa's fragile states lack the capacity to effectively address social and economic challenges. These factors increase the likelihood that U.S. Government assistance could be requested to respond to a manmade or natural disaster.

Implementing Best Practices Could Improve COCOM Foreign Disaster Relief Operations

Although COCOMs effectively planned and executed FDR operations, these operations could be improved by *implementing best practices, such as formalizing FDR response procedures, promoting information sharing, increasing phase-zero activities, and promoting the sharing of lessons learned*. Improvements are needed because COCOMs may not have been aware or were not required to implement these best practices. Without best practices and up-to-date FDR guidance, DoD is less likely to achieve efficiencies when handling potential and actual FDR events.

Formalized COCOM Procedures Needed for Foreign Disaster Relief Activities

COCOMs could improve their ability to respond to disasters by creating a formalized, concise procedural document that describes the process for how the command prepares for, and responds to, disasters in their AOR. Although most commands had a strategic concept plan to describe the general roles and responsibilities during FDR operations, these documents did not provide a concise description of the fast-paced FDR response process at the command.

Most COCOMs had a strategic concept plan for FDR operations. For example, “Commander, USSOUTHCOM Concept Plan 6150-10,” delineates DoD and USSOUTHCOM direction for the use of military resources during FDR operations, and assigns responsibilities for carrying out these operations within the command’s AOR. The document consists of a 40-page base plan and multiple annexes. This type of strategic concept plan is a vital document to delineate staff roles and responsibilities; however, it does not provide a concise description of the response process at the command.

The need for a concise procedural document was highlighted by one command producing an informal document to help describe the command processes for FDR operations.

For example, when USCENTCOM was preparing for a possible FDR operation during the 2010 flooding in Pakistan, USCENTCOM personnel stated that the command had not executed a FDR operation in a few years, and some command personnel did not know the command process for FDR operations. As a result, a USCENTCOM official produced a one-page information paper describing the overall U.S. Government process for responding to disasters, the process for DoD involvement, and the related authorities. The final

The need for a concise procedural document was highlighted by one command producing an informal document to help describe the command process for FDR operations.

section of the information paper was “General Key Directorate Responsibilities,” which the document stated was in development. The creation of this document is a good example of the need for a procedural document to inform key personnel of the command’s FDR response process.

USPACOM was the only command we visited that had a command-approved procedural document that outlined the command procedures for FDR operations. The 23-page Power-Point presentation, according to a USPACOM official, was reviewed by most command directorates and approved at the general officer, flag officer, or Senior Executive Service level. Further, the document was reviewed and approved every 6 months and distributed through official command channels. The procedural document contains a number of important elements to inform command personnel of the process for responding to disasters in their AOR, such as:

- FDR strategic framework,
- FDR operational framework,
- commander's intent,
- AOR intelligence assessment,
- FDR response timeline and process,
- operational planning team participants and deliverables,
- forces available, and
- suggested FDR training.

This document and its elements are good examples of the formalized procedures that other COCOMs can build on to improve their command's ability to plan and execute FDR operations. Additionally, providing an overview of how FDR operations are funded would inform COCOM personnel of the unique process used to fund FDR operations.

Implementation of a concise, command-approved procedural document that incorporates, at a minimum, the elements shown above, could benefit all commands that conduct FDR operations. Specifically, a USPACOM official explained that the document would inform action officers and key players of the command-approved process for responding to disasters. Furthermore, maintaining a procedural document would provide continuity during command personnel rotations and inform command personnel on what is expected of others during a FDR operation.

Expanded and Formal Information Sharing Is Needed

Multiple COCOMs identified information sharing with non-DoD partners as a challenge during FDR operations. Some commands have taken steps to expand the information sharing avenues during FDR operations. For example, some COCOMs have implemented the use of Web-based portals, and resisted the tendency to overclassify FDR related information. Additionally, COCOM personnel stressed the importance of working in an unclassified environment, when possible. Although these efforts are steps in the right direction, information sharing remains a challenge for commands. COCOMs can realize efficiencies in FDR operations by promoting unclassified information sharing and further considering the best way to make critical information widely available through new or existing information sharing avenues.

Joint Publication 3-29 highlights the importance of information sharing with non-DoD partners and the need for more civil-military collaboration.

The publication states that:

making critical information widely available to multiple responding civilian and military elements not only reduces duplication of effort, but also enhances coordination and collaboration and provides a common knowledge base so that critical information can be pooled, analyzed, compared, contrasted, validated, and reconciled. Civil-military collaboration networks need to be designed to dismantle traditional institutional stovepipes and facilitate the sharing of information among civilian and military organizations.

COCOM officials identified a variety of methods used to share information with non-DoD partners during a FDR operation. For example, USCENTCOM officials said that they communicate with non-DoD partners by e-mail through the Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router Network. Other COCOMs use portals such as the All Partners Access Network, which provides a platform to share information through blogs, document sharing, planning and discussion forums, and posting photos. Additionally, some commands access the United Nations Relief Web System to obtain information on FDR efforts. Although these communication and information sharing channels are a step in the right direction, DoD officials stated that challenges remain because multiple information sharing avenues exist to DoD and some relief organizations are reluctant to use DoD-operated portals.

The COCOMs challenges to sharing information during FDR operations could lead to duplication of effort and impact the command's ability to accurately plan and execute relief operations. Making information that could be beneficial to other organizations widely available would demonstrate DoD's willingness to share information with non-DoD partners. When possible, commands should also avoid the overclassification of FDR-related information. Additionally, *the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the COCOMs should consider the best way to share information with non-DoD partners through new and/or existing information sharing avenues.*

COCOMs Should Continue Strengthening Phase-Zero Activities

All COCOMs conducted selected phase-zero activities to enhance disaster response preparedness and capabilities. Examples of these activities include establishing

COCOMs could realize additional efficiencies during FDR operations through phase-zero activities that increase both the capacity of partner nations and DoD's ability to respond to disasters.

memoranda of understanding between the DoD and non-DoD partners; developing Acquisition, Cross-Servicing Agreements; and conducting multi-national exercises. Officials from most COCOMs emphasized the importance of using phase-zero activities to proactively prepare for conducting successful operations once a disaster occurs. COCOMs could realize additional efficiencies during FDR operations through

phase-zero activities that increase both the capacity of partner nations and DoD's ability to respond to disasters.

For example, USSOUTHCOM has a memorandum of understanding with Food for the Poor to promote community-based development, human capacity strengthening, and disaster preparedness. The memorandum allows for coordination and the contribution of assets to achieve common goals within desired countries. Memoranda of understanding such as this help build relationships between DoD and non-DoD partners, which maximizes efforts and lowers costs to accomplish common goals.

Acquisition, Cross-Servicing Agreements are agreements between two parties to facilitate logistic support, supplies, or services such as petroleum, transportation, medical services, and/or airlift. For example, in May 2011, the United States signed an Acquisition, Cross-Servicing Agreement with Spain. The benefits of these agreements include promotion of interoperability, enhancement of operational readiness, cost-effective mutual support, reduced deployment footprint for joint exercises, and responsive support during FDR operations.

In 2011, USCENTCOM participated in Regional Cooperation, a large-scale multinational exercise conducted in the Republic of Tajikistan, to achieve unity among the countries of Central and South Asia. The exercise focused on emergency disaster response, developing tools for better coordination during multinational operations, and improving international civil-military cooperation.

By strengthening phase-zero activities related to FDR operations, commands can realize efficiencies when a disaster response is needed. For example, if partner nations are better prepared to respond to disasters, they will be less reliant on DoD or U.S. Government assistance. This will also help the governments of U.S. allies be viewed more positively by their citizens. Additionally, by establishing relationships through exercises with other countries, command personnel will know who they need to engage with rather than meeting for the first time during an actual disaster response resulting in a faster and more efficient DoD response.

Lessons Learned Could Be Captured and Shared More Effectively

COCOM personnel completed lessons learned and after-action reports after FDR operations and major exercises. A Joint Staff official stated that the primary system used to share lessons learned is the Joint Lessons Learned Information System, which facilitates the collection and dissemination of lessons learned to improve the development and readiness of the Joint Force. The system provides a standard process for disseminating critical lessons learned across organizations for operations, exercises, training, and real-world events. All COCOMs use the Joint Lessons Learned Information System; however, how extensively COCOM personnel share command-created after-action reports or use the information shared by other commands is unclear.

The Joint Center for Operations Analysis, part of the now disestablished U.S. Joint Forces Command, created an information paper in July 2011 on lessons learned from multiple FDR operations. The intent of the paper is to inform senior leaders and planners about the challenges they could face in future FDR operations. Common themes

identified in the paper include the speed of initial response, existing theater engagement, and coordination with host-nation governments and other organizations. This standalone document is potentially as helpful as multiple after-action reports and contains information that COCOMs can use to shape planning and execution efforts for FDR operations. This information is especially important for COCOMs that have not conducted large-scale FDR operations, such as USAFRICOM, and can help them overcome preventable obstacles.

The information paper prepared by the Joint Center for Operations Analysis is an example of the type of information that COCOMs should share. Sharing lessons learned and after-action reports with similar information can assist other COCOMs to effectively conduct FDR operations. The Joint Lessons Learned Information System is just one way commands can access the lessons learned by other COCOMs. Ensuring that commands share and review other COCOMs' after-action reports will also help avoid preventable obstacles.

DoD Needs Current Foreign Disaster Relief Guidance

DoDD 5100.46 establishes policy for the use of DoD resources in FDR operations and assigns responsibilities for the implementation of those policies; however, it has not been updated since 1975. DoD needs updated FDR policy to reflect the accurate organizational entities involved in FDR and their current responsibilities.

Requirements to Review DoD Issuances

DoDI 5025.01 requires all DoD directives to be reviewed before the 5-year anniversary of publication to ensure they are necessary, current, and consistent with DoD policy and statutory authority by being reissued, certified as current, or canceled. If certified as current, the issuance must be revised and reissued or canceled within 7 years of publication. Specifically, each issuance is reviewed to determine whether each authority or responsibility is a current requirement and is appropriately assigned and whether the organizational entities cited are accurate. If no change is required at the 5-year review, a memorandum must be issued to certify that the review requirements were met and identify any administrative changes required, such as updating organizational names.

DoDD 5100.46 Needs to Be Updated

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy did not follow DoDI 5025.01 by not revising and reissuing, or certifying as current, the 37-year-old DoDD 5100.46. Specifically, the Directive did not contain roles and responsibilities of some of the key organizations involved in FDR operations, such as OFDA and ASD (SO/LIC). In addition, the process detailed in the Directive does not accurately describe the current practices used to plan and execute FDR operations.

For example, the following organizations play a role in DoD FDR operations but are not mentioned in DoDD 5100.46:

- OFDA is the lead Federal office for FDR operations. An OFDA representative is embedded at each COCOM and plays a key coordination role between OFDA and the COCOM during all phases of FDR operations.
- ASD (SO/LIC) prepares and coordinates a recommendation to the Secretary of Defense on the appropriate level of DoD FDR assistance to be provided. The Directive states that requests are sent to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.
- DSCA manages the OHDACA funding for FDR operations. The Directive states that the request from DOS contains an amount of funding allocated to DoD. However, OHDACA now funds DoD FDR operations, and the approved amount is stated in the memorandum authorizing execution that the Secretary of Defense sends to the COCOM.

As a result of not being reissued or certified as current since 1975, DoDD 5100.46 did not contain the accurate organizational entities involved in FDR or their current responsibilities. In addition, the Directive was not consistent with how FDR is currently planned and executed. Although there was a 2004 guidance update that provided some detail on the approval process, COCOMs lack formal guidance that reflects the current FDR environment on which to base their concept of operation plans for FDR. Although OFDA, ASD (SO/LIC), and DSCA are discussed in the 2004 guidance, an updated directive was needed to ensure that all COCOMs are operating under the same guidelines and standards. A lack of clear updated guidance could lead to inconsistent interpretations of authorities and responsibilities to provide FDR assistance.

Conclusion

In the event of disasters, such as, the earthquake in Turkey (2011), the flooding in Pakistan (2010), the earthquake in Haiti (2010), and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan (2011), the U.S. military has and will continue to provide aid and assistance because of its unique assets and capabilities. FDR enhances relationships with host nations and non-DoD partners and helps partner nations better prepare to respond to disasters.

To maximize the benefits that come from conducting FDR operations, COCOMs should consider implementing the best practices identified in this report. In the past, COCOMs may not have known about or were not required to implement best practices. Best practices will allow the most efficient practices for FDR to be available to all COCOMs. For example, similar obstacles faced and overcome at one command can be prevented at another. In addition, clear, updated guidance can improve the understanding of authorities and responsibilities to provide FDR assistance. Without best practices and up-to-date FDR guidance, DoD is less likely to achieve efficiencies when handling potential and actual FDR events.

Management Comments on the Report and Our Response

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Comments

The Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief and Global Health, responded on behalf of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The Director defined FDR and identified the three instances when DoD may provide FDR in support of U.S. Government efforts as outlined in the new DoDD 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief," July 6, 2012. The Director also noted that the U.S. military is not an instrument of first resort in responding to foreign disasters; rather, it supports civilian assistance.

Our Response

We agree with the Director's comments regarding the purpose of FDR and the instances in which DoD may provide assistance or become participants in FDR operations. Although differences in wording may exist, the Director's comments were consistent with our report. In our report, we defined FDR and discussed when DoD may provide assistance; however, during our audit, the newly issued DoDD 5100.46 was not in effect. We referenced the DoDD 5100.46 and other publications in effect at the time of our review. Specifically, we referenced the May 2004 policy memorandum, "Policy and Procedures for DoD Participation in Foreign Disaster Relief/Emergency Response Operations," because the December 4, 1975, DoDD 5100.46 only stated one way for DoD to provide FDR assistance. In addition, we agree that the U.S. military is not a first resort, and military assets should be requested only when there is no comparable civilian alternative and when the use of military assets can meet a critical humanitarian need.

Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

1. We recommend that the Commander, U.S. European Command; Commander, U.S. Central Command; Commander, U.S. Southern Command; Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; and Commander, U.S. Africa Command, implement best practices for foreign disaster relief in key areas, such as command procedures, information sharing, phase-zero activities, and dissemination of lessons learned.

U.S. European Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. Southern Command, U.S. Pacific Command, and U.S. Africa Command Comments

The Chief of Plans Division, J-35, USEUCOM; the Executive Director Inspector General, USCENTCOM; the Director of Theater Engagement, J7, USSOUTHCOM; the Deputy Director for Operations, USPACOM; and the Director of Strategy and Plans, J5, USAFRICOM responded on behalf of the Commanders, USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USSOUTHCOM, USPACOM, and USAFRICOM, and agreed with the recommendation. The Chief of Plans, USEUCOM stated that USEUCOM plans to review disaster relief plans from other COCOMs in order to incorporate concepts, ideas, and best practices

from those plans into the USEUCOM plan. The estimated completion date for this is February 2013. The Executive Director Inspector General, USCENTCOM stated that USCENTCOM published Contingency Plan 1211-12 which provides guidance on foreign humanitarian assistance/disaster relief execution, and their Joint Operations Center maintains all crisis action team records for disaster relief operations. Additionally, the Executive Director Inspector General, USCENTCOM, noted that the recommendation could be further implemented with additional guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy or Joint Staff with specific examples of the best practices that all COCOMs should use to better plan and execute FDR operations. The Director of Theater Engagement, USSOUTHCOM, stated that USSOUTHCOM is using Disaster Awareness to promote unclassified information sharing and has also fully implemented the Joint Lessons Learned Information System as the command's system of record. The Deputy Director for Operations, USPACOM, stated that USPACOM already implements the best practices recommended in the report and will continue to share lessons learned through the Joint Lessons Learned Information System. The Director of Strategy and Plans, USAFRICOM, stated that USAFRICOM published AFRICOM Command Instruction 3200.13, "Crisis Joint Standing Operating Procedure," March 23, 2012, to standardize the planning processes across directorates and ensure a timely response to crises. In addition, the Director of Strategy and Plans, USAFRICOM, noted that Contingency Plan 7200-11, "Foreign Humanitarian Assistance," July 1, 2011, directs all joint planning teams to create products to the maximum extent possible at the unclassified level. Furthermore, the Director of Strategy and Plans, USAFRICOM, noted that USAFRICOM is an active participant in the Joint Lessons Learned Information System.

Our Response

Comments from all Commands were responsive, and no further comments are required.

2. We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, in coordination with geographic combatant commanders, conduct a study to identify steps that can be taken to improve information sharing capabilities with non-DoD partners during foreign disaster relief operations through new or existing information sharing avenues.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Comments

The Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief and Global Health, responded on behalf of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The Director stated that over the last 2 years, DoD has benefited from studies, white papers, and seminars conducted by various organizations to evaluate and implement options for improving information sharing internally, within the civilian interagency, and with nongovernmental organizations. The Director gave several examples used by various COCOMs, such as the All Partners Access Network. The Director also stated that DoD has been working with various organizations on ways to improve information sharing between DoD and non-DoD partners. In addition, the Director noted other efforts supporting information sharing such as the Joint Center for Lessons Learned which collects and disseminates relevant lessons learned to enhance joint operations capabilities, including FDR operations.

Our Response

The comments from the Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief and Global Health were partially responsive. The Director did not state agreement or disagreement with the recommendation. However, the Director did provide examples of studies DoD has benefited from for improving information sharing and stated that DoD will continue to work with pertinent parties to improve processes and share lessons learned. The actions taken met the intent of the recommendation. Therefore, no further comments are required.

3. We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy:

a. Revise DoD Directive 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief,” to accurately describe DoD’s organizational roles and responsibilities for disaster relief.

b. Regularly review and reissue DoD Directive 5100.46 as required.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Comments

The Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief and Global Health responded on behalf of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The Director noted that DoD Directive 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief,” was reissued on July 6, 2012, and will be reviewed and updated as appropriate. Specifically, the updated directive states that it must be reissued, cancelled, or certified current within 5 years of its publication in accordance with DoDI 5025.01, or it will expire effective July 6, 2022, and be removed from the DoD Issuances Web site.

Our Response

The comments from the Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief and Global Health were partially responsive. The Director did not state agreement or disagreement with the recommendation. However, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy issued the updated DoD Directive 5100.46 on July 6, 2012. The updated directive includes guidance as to when DoD has the authority to provide FDR assistance and how assistance can be requested. It also briefly discusses the use of OHDACA to fund DoD FDR operations and now contains the accurate organizational entities involved in FDR operations and their current responsibilities. This will continue to ensure that all COCOMs are operating under the same guidelines and standards and are aware of the proper authorities related to FDR operations. The actions taken met the intent of the recommendation. Therefore, no further comments are required.

Additional Comments on the Report and Our Response

Although not required to comment, the Acting Principal Director, Programs, DSCA; and the Deputy Director, Partnership Strategy, Joint Staff J-5, provided the following comments on the report. For the full text, see the Management Comments section of the report.

Defense Security Cooperation Agency Comments

The Acting Principal Director, DSCA, did not agree with the audit objective and recommended that it should be changed. Additionally, the Acting Principal Director, DSCA, stated that DSCA does not perform operational and tactical level execution for FDR nor does DSCA provide notification to Joint Staff that preparations are complete. The Director, DSCA, also stated that while DoDD 5100.46 established DoD FDR policy, it was not a procedural document that can assist COCOMs with an overview of best practices or lessons learned and there was no connection between an outdated directive and a lack of knowledge of “efficient practices.” Additionally, the Acting Principal Director noted that we referenced the Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router Network as a special communication tool used by USCENTCOM and we should have focused that section of the report on the benefits of using that method over communicating on classified networks. Additional comments included observations or addressed preferences for adding information in the report. Specific examples addressed in our response include the Acting Principal Director’s suggestions that we include a discussion of how the other layers of DoD interact and possible recommendations for improvements in the interaction of the COCOMs and DoD personnel in Washington, D.C., during FDR events. The Acting Principal Director also recommended that we expand the recommendation to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to include a review of internal communication processes.

Our Response

The statements identified regarding DSCA’s role in the approval process were based on the May 2004 policy memorandum, “Policy and Procedures for DoD Participation in Foreign Disaster Relief/Emergency Response Operations.” Although not a formal directive, at the time of our review, it provided updated policy and procedures for DoD participation in FDR operations. The statement in the finding regarding efficient practices not being known by all COCOMs references the effect of having not implemented best practices and was not related to the discussion regarding DoDD 5100.46. We agree with DSCA that the use of unclassified networks enables greater communication with non-DoD partners who do not have access to classified networks. The purpose of the paragraph was to identify the methods COCOMs were currently using to share unclassified information with non-DoD partners and to highlight that challenges still existed. In addition, we recognize that DoD has a supporting role in FDR operations and the COCOMs are responsible for conducting FDR operations as directed. However, we focused our report primarily on the COCOM’s ability to plan and execute FDR operations but did assess the support provided by DoD organizations to enable the COCOMs to effectively conduct FDR operations and found that DoD organizations provided satisfactory support with the exception of the outdated DoDD 5100.46.

Joint Staff Comments

The Deputy Director, Partnership Strategy, Joint Staff J-5, agreed with the report’s finding but noted that DoD’s involvement in FDR is not to prevent instability in a geographic combatant command’s area of responsibility as the objective of the report states. The Deputy Director further stated that while regional stability may be affected by

FDR operations, it is simply a potential by-product of those operations, not an objective. Additionally, the Deputy Director noted the importance of clearly identifying when DoD may provide FDR in support of U.S. Government efforts.

Our Response

We agree that regional stability is not an objective of FDR operations, rather a by-product. However, the intent of the Objective section of the report was to restate the audit objective as it was announced. In the report we defined FDR as prompt aid that can be used to alleviate the suffering of disaster victims. We agree with the importance of clearly identifying when DoD may provide FDR support. As stated in our response to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's comments, at the time of our audit work, the newly issued DoDD 5100.46 was not in effect so our report made reference to policy from the DoDD 5100.46 and other publications in effect during the audit timeframe.

Appendix. Scope and Methodology

We conducted this performance audit from September 2011 through June 2012 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

We contacted, visited, or interviewed officials from the following organizations.

- Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
- USEUCOM
- USCENTCOM
- USSOUTHCOM
- USPACOM
 - Pacific Disaster Center
 - Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
- USAFRICOM
- U.S. Transportation Command
- DSCA
- Joint Staff
- OFDA

We evaluated the planning and execution of FDR operations by USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USSOUTHCOM, USPACOM, and USAFRICOM. We reviewed and analyzed Joint Publication 3-29, “Foreign Humanitarian Assistance,” March 17, 2009; and DoDD 5100.46, “Foreign Disaster Relief,” December 4, 1975, to determine DoD policy for conducting FDR operations. We also reviewed and analyzed a 2004 memorandum to determine guidance for the COCOMs’ inherent authority to conduct immediate life-saving FDR operations without OSD approval. In addition, we reviewed and analyzed DoDI 5025.01, “DoD Directives Program,” July 1, 2010, to determine procedures governing DoD issuances.

To gain an understanding of how COCOMs plan and execute FDR operations, we visited USEUCOM, USSOUTHCOM, USPACOM, and USAFRICOM and met with applicable staff directorates to discuss their roles and responsibilities in planning and executing an FDR operation. We also spoke with officials from USCENTCOM to learn how they conduct FDR operations. We gathered documentation from the COCOMs related to the planning and execution of FDR operations, including: sample concepts of operations, information on training and exercises, funding data, and after-action reports. In addition, we obtained the concept plans from several COCOMs to determine the command-level policy for FDR operations.

Use of Computer-Processed Data

We did not use computer-processed data to perform this audit.

Prior Coverage

During the last 5 years, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued two reports discussing FDR operations. Unrestricted GAO reports can be accessed over the Internet at <http://www.gao.gov>.

GAO

GAO Report No. GAO-12-359, “Humanitarian and Development Assistance: Project Evaluations and Better Information Sharing Needed to Manage the Military’s Efforts,” February 8, 2012

GAO Report No. GAO-10-801, “Defense Management: U.S. Southern Command Demonstrates Interagency Collaboration, but Its Haiti Disaster Response Revealed Challenges Conducting a Large Military Operation,” July 28, 2010

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Comments



SPECIAL OPERATIONS/
LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2500

July 20, 2012

Mr. Michael J. Roark
Director, Joint and Southwest Asia Operations
Inspector General
Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

Dear Mr. Roark:

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy appreciates the opportunity to participate in the recently completed Inspector General (IG) review of Geographic Combatant Commanders' ability to plan and execute foreign disaster relief operations and to provide comment to IG Draft Report "Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made (Project NoD2011-D000JA-0280), dated 22 June 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify that, as outlined in Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief", dated July 6, 2012, foreign disaster relief (FDR) is assistance that can be used immediately to alleviate the suffering of foreign disaster victims. DoD Components may provide disaster assistance in support of U.S. FDR efforts only:

- (1) At the direction of the President; or
- (2) When the Secretary of Defense or a designee approves, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, a request for assistance from another Federal department or agency; or
- (3) In emergency situations in order to save human lives, where there is not sufficient time to seek the prior concurrence of the Secretary of State, in which case the Secretary of Defense shall advise and seek the concurrence of the Secretary of State as soon as practicable thereafter.

The U.S. military is not an instrument of first resort in responding to foreign disasters; rather it supports civilian relief agencies. DoD may become participate in FDR when civilian authorities request assistance, and/or when the military provides a unique service, and/or when the civilian response capacity is overwhelmed. DoD conducts FDR under sections 404 and 2561, Title 10, United States Code.

Over the last two years, the Department has benefited from studies, white papers, and seminars conducted by the Department of State's Humanitarian Information Unit, National

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Defense University, Office of Naval Research, academic community, and others to evaluate and implement options for improving information sharing and best practices internally, within the civilian interagency, and with non-governmental humanitarian organizations. For example, multiple Geographic Combatant Commands adopted the "All Partners Access Network", or APAN, to promote unclassified information sharing and to facilitate making critical disaster response information widely available to DoD and non-DoD partners. Additionally, USPACOM and USSOUTHCOM are using the Disaster Aware (Risk Assessment, planning, & Incident Decision Support [Rapids]) to promote unclassified information sharing. The Department's OSD CIO staff is working closely with the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, World Food Program, and the World Health Organization on ways to improve information sharing between DoD and non-DoD humanitarian partners.

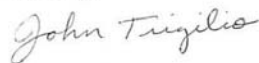
Other efforts which support information sharing include the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Joint Center for Lessons Learned which collects and disseminates relevant lessons learned to enhance joint operations capabilities, including FDR operations. DoD will continue to work with pertinent parties to improve processes and share lessons learned.

As previously noted, DoDD 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief" was reissued on July 6, 2012; as appropriate, it will be reviewed and updated.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the IG draft report and for the courtesy extended by your staff in conducting this review.

Our point of contact for this action is [REDACTED]

Sincerely,



John Trigilio
Director, Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster
Relief, & Global Health
Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations

U.S. European Command Comments



HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
UNIT 30400
APO AE 09131

ECJ3-PD

20 JUL 12


MEMORANDUM FOR: Joint Staff, J-5

SUBJECT: Response to EC1218015858, Action Folder: 12-02551 - /O-FA2/DoDIG DRAFT REPORT. MOST GEOGRAPHIC COCOMs EFFECTIVELY PLANNED & EXECUTED DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS, BUT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE

1. (U) References:

a. (U) O-FA2 / DoDIG DRAFT REPORT

2. EUCOM has reviewed the DoDIG report and concurs with their findings. EUCOM plans to review Disaster Relief plans from other COCOMs during the upcoming review cycle. Concepts, ideas and best practices from those plans that are compatible and effective will be folded into EUCOMs plan. Estimated completion is Feb 2013.


PATRICK L. FETTERMAN
COL, U.S. Army
Chief of Plans Division, ECJ-35

U.S. Central Command Comments



UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
7115 SOUTH BOUNDARY BOULEVARD
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5101

16 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL
AUDITOR, JOINT AND SOUTHWEST ASIA OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: DODIG Draft Report, Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively
Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made
(DODIG Project No. D2012-D000JA-0280.000).

1. The U.S. CENTCOM response to the DODIG recommendation in the Draft Report is consolidated in this signed memorandum.
2. U.S. CENTCOM is forwarding this official response and signed memorandum to comply with your request.

Consolidated U.S. CENTCOM RESPONSE: U.S. CENTCOM concurs with the
recommendations.

3. POC is [REDACTED] email:
ccigaudit@centcom.mil.


DUANE T. RACKLEY
GS-15, DAF
Executive Director Inspector General

Enclosures
CENTCOM Response
Base Plan

**DODIG Draft Report – Dated 22 Jun 12
(Project No. D2012-D000JA-0280.000)**

**"Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed
Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made"**

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Commander, U.S. European Command; Commander, U.S. Central Command; Commander, U.S. Southern Command; Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; and Commander, U.S. Africa Command, implement best practices for disaster relief in key areas, such as command procedures, information sharing, phase-zero activities, and dissemination of lessons learned.

USCENTCOM Response: (U) USCENTCOM concurs with DODIG recommendations for improvements to CCMD DR operations as found in this draft report. In regards to the implementation of DODIG recommendations found in the draft report, USCENTCOM published CONPLAN 1211-12 which provides guidance on FHA/DR execution and the USCENTCOM Joint Operations Center (JOC) maintains all Crisis Action Team (CAT) records for USCENTCOM DR operations. The CAT is the USCENTCOM command and control element for DR operations in Headquarters USCENTCOM. CAT documentation should include after action reports for historic purposes as well as promulgation of best practices. To further implement the DODIG recommendations for the implementation of best practices USCENTCOM recommends OSD-P or Joint Staff provided further guidance with specific examples of the best practices that all CCMDs should use to better plan and execute DR operations.

=====

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE REPORT

(List comments/corrections/clarifications that DODIG should make to the report. Each comment should be numbered, and show the classification of information provided in the comment. List the page number(s) from which information is derived within the report. If comment recommends a change to wording, show the language to be changed and new wording in "quotations" as shown in the example.)

1. (U) None

APPROVED BY:
Gary S. Supnick
GS-15, DAFC
Chief, Interagency Plans and
Stability Operations Division

PREPARED BY:
James K. McCollum
MAJ, USAR
CCJ3-IA-IPSO-HDM

U.S. Southern Command Comments



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND
9301 NW 33RD STREET
DORAL, FL 33172-1202

SCJ7

3 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT: DoDIG Draft Report – Most Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) Effectively Planned & Executed Disaster Relief Operations, But Improvements Could Be Made

1. US Southern Command agrees with the recommendations described in the "DoDIG Draft Report - Most Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) Effectively Planned & Executed Disaster Relief Operations, But Improvements Could Be Made". The following actions have been completed or initiated in order to implement the recommended best practices:
 - a. In addition to CONPLAN 6150, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, US Southern Command maintains SC Pamphlet 0512, Staff Activation for Crisis Response SOP (signed 31 January 2012). This SOP defines the procedures for activating crisis response operations and covers operational guidelines, functions and mission essential tasks when a crisis occurs. This document provides a concise description of the response process at US Southern Command in addition to delineating staff roles and responsibilities during disaster response operations.
 - b. US Southern Command has adapted the All Partners Area Network (APAN) and the Disaster Aware (Risk Assessment, Planning, & Incident Decision Support [RAPIDS]) to promote unclassified information sharing and to facilitate making critical disaster response information widely available to DoD and non-DoD partners.
 - c. Phase 0 HA/DR capacity building is a priority for US Southern Command. US Southern Command Theater Campaign Plan Intermediate Military Objective #4 focuses on building capacity for HA/DR by promoting Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational response capacity for disaster relief efforts in the US Southern Command area of responsibility. US Southern Command conducts disaster response training and exercises to ensure the staff, components, and force providers have the capacity to respond to the effects of natural and man-made disasters. US Southern Command also focuses the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) program activities to build the capacities of partner nation military and security forces and select civilian organizations to plan and respond to the effects of natural and man-made disasters.
 - d. US Southern Command has fully implemented the Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) as the command's lessons learned system of record. This provides full connectivity to all other Combatant Commands and select Combat Support Agencies. US


SCJ7

SUBJECT: DoDIG Draft Report – Most Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) Effectively Planned & Executed Disaster Relief Operations, But Improvements Could Be Made

Southern Command also actively engages the Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA) during real-world disaster response operations to support active lessons learned collection.

2. The Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy is currently updating DoD Directive 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief." A draft copy of DODD 5100.46 has been provided to US Southern Command to facilitate staff preparation for disaster response operations and to enhance Theater Security Cooperation disaster preparedness planning activities.

3. POC for more information is [REDACTED]


GERALD W. KETCHUM
Major General, US Army
Director of Theater Engagement (J7)

U.S. Pacific Command Comments



COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND
(USPACOM)
CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII 96861-4028

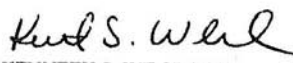
20 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, OFFICE OF INSPECTOR
GENERAL

FROM: HQ USPACOM/J30
BOX 64013
CAMP H.M. SMITH, HI 96861-4017

SUBJECT: USPACOM Response to Draft Report "Most Geographic Combatant Commands
Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, But Improvements
Could Be Made" (Dated 22 June 2012)

1. USPACOM agrees with the findings and recommendations in the Draft Report "Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made" (Project No. D2012-D000JA-0280.000, dated 22 June 2012).
2. USPACOM already implements the "best practices" recommended in this draft report. As mentioned in the report, USPACOM will continue to update their Standing Foreign Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief Concept of Operations (CONOPs) on a biannual basis. We have multiple systems and procedures to share information with non-DoD partners through APAN (All Partners Access Networks), liaison officers, and HA/DR conferences, training, and seminars. USPACOM and its subordinate commands conduct multiple phase-zero activities to reduce risk in partner nations and improve our own ability to respond to a disaster. Finally, USPACOM will continue to share lessons learned through the Joint Lessons Learned Information System, as well as participating in formal studies and investigations like this one.
3. The point of contact for this action is [REDACTED] can be reached at DSN [REDACTED]


KENNETH S. WILSBACH
Brig Gen, USAF
Deputy Director for Operations

U.S. Africa Command Comments



HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND
UNIT 29951
APO AE 09751-9951

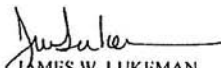
J5

06 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT: JSAP ACTION NUMBER 12-02551

1. I have reviewed JSAP 12-02551 and DODIG DRAFT Project No. D212-D000JA-0280.000 and agree with the reports three recommendations.
2. Regarding GCCs implementing the DODIG best practices for disaster relief USAFRICOM has done the following:
 - a. Command Procedures. USAFRICOM published AFRICOM COMMAND INSTRUCTION (ACI) 3200.13 *Crisis Joint Standing Operating Procedures* 23 March 2012, which describes the Commander's crisis planning process beginning with the recognition of a crisis and progressing through the employment of U.S. military forces. This standardizes planning processes across directorates and ensures a timely response to crises.
 - b. Information Sharing. Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) 7200-11 *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* (FHA) 01 July 2011, directs all joint planning teams conducting mission analysis for pending FHA missions to create products to the max extent possible at the UNCLASSIFIED level. Annex K of CONPLAN 7200 directs operational units to collaborate with humanitarian relief agencies and share information on the All Partners Access Network (APAN) or UNCLASSIFIED network of choice.
 - c. Phase 0 Activities. USAFRICOM's Theater and Subordinate Campaign Plans (SCP) direct USAFRICOM and Component Staffs to prepare to respond to a potential humanitarian crisis. Each regional SCP identifies countries of primary importance in which to focus the development of this capability.
 - d. Lessons Learned. USAFRICOM is an active participant in the Joint Lessons Learned Information System but agrees that after action reports such as *OPERATION LIFELINE* submitted by Combined Disaster Assistance Center-Pakistan on 24 January 2007 are extremely effective in passing and preserving organizational knowledge. Currently USAFRICOM relies on sound doctrine and lessons learned to help achieve success in disaster relief planning.


JAMES W. LUKEMAN
Brigadier General, USMC
Deputy Director of Strategy and Plans, J5

Defense Security Cooperation Agency Comments



DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY
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AUG 1 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL, JOINT AND SOUTHWEST
ASIA OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) Comments: DoD IG Project
D2011-D000JA-0280.000 (Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively
Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be
Made)

Reference: DoD Office of Inspector General, Draft Report on Most Geographic Combatant
Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but
Improvements Could Be made (Project No. D2011-D000JA-0280.000), June 22,
2012

We are responding to your June 22, 2012, request to review the draft subject report.

We have conducted a thorough review of the draft report and have several
recommendations for you to consider. Our detailed comments are attached.

We thank you for your detailed assessment and hope that this information provides
further clarification on Department of Defense Disaster Relief operations.

Diane C. Halvorsen
Acting Principal Director, Programs

Attachment:
As stated



Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) Comments: DoD IG Project D2011-D000JA-0280.000 (Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations, but Improvements Could Be Made)

1.) Issue: Page 1 states: “Our objective was to evaluate the ability of the combatant commands (COCOMs) to plan and execute disaster relief (DR) operations to prevent instability in their areas of responsibility (AORs).”

Page 1- Audit
Objective

Discussion: While responding to disasters is certainly a component of stability operations, the argument can be made that Department of Defense (DoD) DR operations are designed to support the greater U.S. Government (USG) effort to assist partner nations in alleviating the suffering of disaster victims, more so than “prevent(ing) instability.” The primary concern is to keep DR, which is responsive in nature, and DoD Humanitarian Assistance (HA), which is preventive in nature, separate as they are governed by different authorities, funded through different channels (i.e. the Combatant Command funds HA projects, whereas DSCA provides funding for the DR response), and execution authorized at different levels of leadership. Further, DR is conducted at the request of the Department of State (DOS), based on U.S. Agency for International Development/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) validated requests, whereas HA is conducted under DoD authorities without a formal request, though in coordination with DOS and USAID.

Recommendation: Revise sentence. One option is: “Our objective was to evaluate the ability of the Combatant Commands (COCOMs) to plan and execute efficient military operations in support of U.S. Government foreign disaster relief (DR) efforts.”

2.) Issue: “At this time, the applicable COCOM may also send a team to the disaster site to ensure a coherent and comprehensive assessment of requirements and proposed U.S. Government response is conducted” (p. 2-3).

Page 3- Revised
Sentence

Discussion: As written, this statement implies DoD is free to conduct such assessments on its own. USAID/OFDA, as the lead USG agency, should be considered the primary validator of requirements. Any assessments conducted by supporting USG Agencies, which DoD is for DR, should be coordinated with and in support of USAID/OFDA. For example, a DoD assessment team might be used to support USAID/OFDA assessments, and analysis of specific requirements, by providing advice on DoD capabilities (if requested to do so). The DoD mission is not to “ensure a coherent and comprehensive assessment of requirements and proposed U.S. Government response is conducted.” Rather, DoD, as a supporting agency, should provide such support when requested to do so, and with the appropriate level of coordination, in support of the overarching USG response.

Recommendation: Remove this sentence or change it to explain how DoD may support the USG effort by contributing to the focus and identification of DoD support options. An option is: “If appropriate and coordinated with OFDA, the applicable COCOM may deploy an assessment team to the disaster site to enhance coordination at the field level, provide an advisory capability, and assist in identifying specific types of assistance that could be requested of DoD.”

3.) Issue: Page 3 states: “If the Secretary of Defense approves the recommendation, DSCA finalizes logistical and financial details in coordination with the applicable COCOM, USAID, OFDA, Joint Staff, and other relevant offices” **AND** “After DSCA provides notification that preparations are complete, Joint Staff issues an order directing the COCOM to execute the DR operation.”

Discussion: Operational and tactical level execution (i.e. logistics) are not part of DSCA’s responsibilities in DR, and DSCA does not provide “notification that preparations are complete.” The Joint Staff issues the order to execute separately from DSCA, based on the activities authorized by the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). Authorized activities are then executed by the COCOM and subordinate elements (e.g. Joint Task Force) based on mission requirements. DSCA will ensure the authorized amount of OHDACA is available to the COCOM for mission execution and that missions executed are consistent with SECDEF authorizations and OHDACA funded authorities (e.g. 10 USC 404, 10 USC 2561). Additionally, in terms of DSCA’s direct support to DR, DSCA may arrange transportation (as required) and provide nonlethal Excess Property if requested through COCOM channels and included in the authorities granted by SECDEF.

Recommendation: Revise paragraph. An option is: “If the Secretary of Defense approves the recommendation, the Joint Staff issues an order to execute, granting the Combatant Command the ability to execute authorized levels of DoD support in coordination with OFDA, DSCA, and other relevant offices.”

4.) Issue: Page 5 references the outdated Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 5100.46 and states: “As a result, the most efficient practices for DR are not known by all COCOMs.”

Discussion: DoDD 5100.46 establishes DoD DR policy; however, it does not provide “efficient practices.” The Directive, which is currently under review for release in 2012, is not a procedural document that can assist COCOMs with an overview of best practices or lessons learned. Rather, the Directive is designed to identify Department level roles and responsibilities (e.g. Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Department, Combatant Command). An outdated DoDD 5100.46 may be responsible for lack of understanding of DoD DR policy, to include roles and responsibilities, but it is not necessarily a contributing factor for lack of knowledge of “efficient practices.” Best practices and lessons learned should be captured and distributed through other means, such as a DoD study or report.

Recommendation: Remove this statement as there is no connection between the outdated Directive and lack of knowledge of concerning “efficient practices,” or revise the statement to indicate that a gap in understanding of DoD DR policy is the result of an outdated DoDD 5100.46.

5.) Issue: The report focuses solely on the COCOMs’ ability to execute DR activities and includes little to no discussion of how the various layers of DoD (e.g. Joint Staff, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, DSCA, COCOMs) and other USG entities (e.g. DOS, USAID) interact.

Discussion: The COCOMs cannot execute DR missions without SECDEF approval, which is the result of coordination between various DoD entities and USG partners, primarily occurring in Washington, D.C. As such, the report should also include an analysis of how Washington, D.C.-based entities relate, influence and impact COCOM DR mission execution.

For example, the report discusses the work of Operational Planning Teams (OPT) and frames these as individual COCOM events that occur separate from the discussions that happen at the D.C. interagency level (i.e. discussions between DOS, DoD, USAID). The discussions at the D.C. level directly influence COCOM planning and execution, and should not be conducted separately. Rather, the interagency discussions at the D.C. level should be used to provide the COCOM with strategic direction to which operational plans would be crafted at the COCOM level.

Recommendation: Include analysis, and possible recommendations for improvement, of D.C.-COCOM interaction in DR.

6.) Observation: Page 7 states: “A USAFRICOM official said that the command used OHDACA funds to purchase ambulances and supplies and restore buildings in Libya.” To offer a point of clarification, the “buildings” mentioned are elements of the health/medical infrastructure in neighboring Tunisia, which were overwhelmed by displaced personnel fleeing Libya and seeking medical attention.

7.) Observation: Page 7 states: “Furthermore, an USAFRICOM official said that a lack of assets and assigned forces could cause an issue if USAFRICOM is ever required to respond to a disaster in the future.” This statement provides an opportunity to analyze inter-COCOM support and how DoD can become more efficient. For example, there may be ways to develop support agreements to share limited resources between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM.

8.) Observation: The report frequently references “best practices” and recommends COCOMs implement best practices. However, best practices are not universal. Best practices that are effective for one COCOM may not apply to another COCOM. The report should emphasize the importance of identifying issues and developing and implementing solutions, which can be taken from previously recognized best practices and lessons learned.

Further, DoD is limited as it does not have an effective method to capture best practices and lessons learned. The COCOMs also do not have an interactive way to solicit support in identifying solutions from a subject matter expert. One possible solution is for DoD to evaluate the possibility of creating such a support mechanism at the Center of Excellence (COE) in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance. The COE could be equipped to support COCOM’s in addressing key DR issues by serving as the DoD subject matter expert and the “go-to” for capturing and distributing best practices and lessons learned. Additionally, a review of the Joint Lessons Learned Information System could be conducted to identify ways to improve its user-friendliness and usefulness in capturing lessons learned and best practices.

9.) Issue: Page 10 seems to identify the “Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router Network”, otherwise known as “NIPR,” as a special communications tool used by USCENTCOM to communicate with non-DoD partners.

Discussion: NIPR is the unclassified Internet system used by DoD to provide unsecured/unclassified internet access, to include an unclassified email capability. The focus of this point should be the benefits derived from using NIPR to share information with partners. DoD frequently communicates via its Secured Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPR), which limits the ability to share information with those who do not have access to SIPR.

Recommendation: Clarify the lesson learned to explain the use of NIPR, vice SIPR, enables greater communication with a broader range of partners.

10.) Issue: Page 10 states: “COCOMs Should Emphasize Phase-Zero Activities.”

Discussion: COCOMs do emphasize Phase-Zero activities. The DoD HA program places an emphasis on building partner nation capacity in disaster management, which is a DoD HA priority. Steady-state HA projects, executed under the Disaster Preparedness (DP) sector of DoD HA engagement, are designed to improve the response capabilities of partner nations, mitigate their vulnerabilities, and enhance resiliency.

Recommendation: DoD should maintain its strategic emphasis on building partner nation capacity in disaster management and identify ways to improve internal capabilities (e.g. resources available, training and exercise needs).

11.) Observation: The report does not reference the *Department of Defense Support to Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR): Handbook for the Joint Task Force Commander and Below* in its DoD guidance discussion. “This handbook provides a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) for joint forces at the operational and tactical levels tasked to perform Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR) operations in support of the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development... (p. iv)” This document contains valuable information that could be used for planning, as well as training and exercises.

12.) Issue: The report recommends the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy “conduct a study to identify steps that can be taken to improve information sharing capabilities with non-DoD partners during disaster relief operations through new or existing information sharing avenues” (14).

Discussion: This recommendation does not address internal communication issues that DoD could, and should, address. Both internal and external communication could be improved, in terms of identifying critical information requirements, establishing reporting requirements, and further developing roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation: Expand the recommendation to include a review of internal communication processes (e.g. critical information requirements, communication between COCOMs and DC-based entities).



**THE JOINT STAFF
WASHINGTON, DC**

Reply ZIP Code:
20318-0300

20 Jul 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

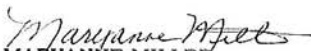
Subject: Response to Request for Joint Staff Coordination on DoD IG Report, "Most Geographic Combatant Commands Effectively Planned and Executed Disaster Relief Operations but Improvements Could Be Made" (Project D2011-D000JA-0280)

1. Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the requested coordination on the subject report. The Joint Staff has coordinated with the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) and provides their consolidated comments in the enclosure.
2. While the Joint Staff agrees in substance with the report's findings and recommendations, it is important to note DoD's involvement in Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR) is not to prevent instability in a GCC's area of responsibility as the objective of your report states. As stated in the recently-reissued Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 5100.46, "Foreign Disaster Relief" (6 Jul 2012), in previous versions of that document, and in 10 USC 404, the purpose of DoD's involvement in foreign disaster relief operations is to save lives and alleviate human suffering.
3. While regional stability may be affected by FDR operations, it is simply a potential by-product of those operations, not an objective. Regional stability objectives are more closely aligned with DoD's humanitarian assistance (HA) efforts, distinct and separate from FDR. HA program activities in turn may contribute to foreign disaster relief through disaster management, emergency preparedness, minor construction, and other such efforts that help a foreign nation better cope with disasters in their country.
4. It is important to clearly identify that DoD may provide foreign disaster assistance in support of U.S. government efforts only:
 - (1) At the direction of the President; or,
 - (2) When the Secretary of Defense or a designee, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, approves a request for assistance from another federal department or agency; or,

Page 1- Audit
Objective

(3) In emergency situations in order to save human lives (Secretary of State concurrence is not required in these situations, but notification is made as soon as practicable).

5. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the report. If you have further questions or concerns, the Joint Staff point of contact is [REDACTED]


MARYANNE MILLER
Brigadier General, USAF
Deputy Director, Partnership
Strategy, Joint Staff J5

Enclosure

A. Consolidated Geographic Combatant Command Responses



Inspector General Department of Defense